

APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES PATENT

FOR

**CAPPING OF COPPER STRUCTURES IN HYDROPHOBIC ILD  
USING AQUEOUS ELECTRO-LESS BATH**

**Inventors**

**Kevin P. O'Brien and Justin K. Brask**

Attorney Docket No.: 110348-135100  
IPG No: P17263

Prepared by: Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, PC  
Pacwest Center  
1211 SW Fifth Ave., Ste 1600-1900  
Portland, Oregon 97204

Al AuYeung  
[aauyeung@schwabe.com](mailto:aauyeung@schwabe.com)  
(ph) 503-796-2437

**Express Mail Label No. ER084884189US**

TECHNICAL FIELD & BACKGROUND

The present invention is related to the field of integrated circuits. More specifically, the present invention is related to the formation of cobalt caps on 5 copper interconnects.

Recently, there is increasing interest in the semiconductor industry to reduce the defects on copper interconnects and properly add a cobalt capping layer to each of the copper interconnects. One area of difficulty preventing the accomplishment of low or no defects and even deposition of a cobalt capping 10 layer on each of the copper interconnects is the cobalt wetting problem. The cobalt wetting problem involves the difficulty of electro-less cobalt solutions evenly wetting the top surface of each of the copper interconnects. Also the wetting problem increases the amount of cobalt particles that get adhered to undesired areas on the wafer.

15

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will be described by way of exemplary embodiments, but not limitations, illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which like references denote similar elements, and in which:

**Figure 1** illustrates a cross sectional view of a portion of a component showing a cobalt capping layer and little or no cobalt particles on the interlayer dielectric layer, in accordance with one embodiment;

**Figures 2a-2b** illustrate a method for making the wafer of Fig. 1, in accordance with one embodiment;

**Figure 3** illustrates a block diagram view of a system for making the wafer of Fig. 1, in accordance with one embodiment; and

**Figure 4** illustrates a block diagram view of a system having the wafer of Fig. 1 in accordance with one embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Embodiments of the present invention include, but are not limited to, a component having the formation of cobalt caps on copper interconnects, method 5 for making such component, and system having such component.

Various aspects of the illustrative embodiments will be described using terms commonly employed by those skilled in the art to convey the substance of their work to others skilled in the art. However, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced with only some of the 10 described aspects. For purposes of explanation, specific numbers, materials and configurations are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the illustrative embodiments. However, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced without the specific details. In other instances, well-known features are omitted or simplified in order not to obscure 15 the illustrative embodiments.

Various operations will be described as multiple discrete operations, in turn, in a manner that is most helpful in understanding the present invention, however, the order of description should not be construed as to imply that these operations are necessarily order dependent. In particular, these operations need 20 not be performed in the order of presentation.

The phrase "in one embodiment" is used repeatedly. The phrase generally does not refer to the same embodiment, however, it may. The terms "comprising", "having" and "including" are synonymous, unless the context dictates otherwise.

Referring now to **Fig. 1**, wherein a cross sectional view of a portion of a component showing a cobalt capping layer and little or no cobalt particles on the interlayer dielectric layer, in accordance with one embodiment. As illustrated, for the embodiment, wafer **100** includes an interlayer dielectric layer **102** and a

5 number of copper structures **104** disposed on the interlayer dielectric layer **102**. Shown in Fig. 1 is a cobalt barrier layer **106** disposed on a top surface **108** of one of the copper structures **104**. Copper structure **104** with cobalt barrier layer **106** may also be referred to as copper structure with capping layer **110** and copper structure without cobalt barrier layer **106** may be referred to as a copper structure

10 without a capping layer **112** as shown.

In various embodiments, the interlayer dielectric layer (ILD) **102** is a partially or fully hydrophobic low K ILD. That is, ILD **102** is of a type that is adverse to an aqueous (water) based solution, resulting in higher surface tension adverse to the aqueous based solution, which in turn may lead to the uneven

15 wetting of the top surface of the partially or fully hydrophobic low K ILD. An example of a hydrophobic low K ILD is a low K Si-O ILD having methyl content. In various embodiments, the low K dielectric constant value is 3.5 or lower.

As will be described in more detail below, the cobalt barrier layer **106** is deposited on the top surface **108** using an aqueous cobalt electro-less bath

20 assisted by sonic energy to reduce the surface tension, contributing to the interlayer dielectric layer **102** having lower or substantially free of adhered cobalt particles **114**. Substantially free is with little or no cobalt particles **114** on the interlayer dielectric layer **102**. The sonic energy aids in the thorough and homogeneous deposition of cobalt onto the top surface **108**. The sonic energy

25 also reduces the surface tension for the electro-less solution, increasing the wettability of the top surface **108**.

In various embodiments, the interlayer dielectric layer **102** may have lower or substantially free of adhered particles **114** due to further simultaneous rinsing and applying of sonic energy to the interlayer dielectric layer **102** together, after deposition of the cobalt barrier layer **106**.

5 The sonic energy, whether it is applied during deposition or rinsing may be a selected one of mega and ultra sonic energy. The sonic energy may be in a frequency range of 10 to 1200 kiloHertz and power in the range of 1 to 5 Watts/cm<sup>2</sup>. The sonic energy may be applied during a portion or the entire duration of deposition/rinsing.

10 In various embodiments, the sonic energy applied during deposition and rinsing may be of the same or different type, same or different frequency, as well as same or different power.

Figures 2a-2b illustrate a method of making wafer **100** in accordance with one embodiment. The embodiment wafer **100** has a hydrophobic interlayer dielectric layer **122** (hereinafter, simply interlayer dielectric layer) and a plurality of copper structures **124** partially encased in an interlayer dielectric layer **122**. Top surfaces **128** of the copper structures **124** are exposed and substantially co-planar with a top surface of the interlayer dielectric layer **130**. A cobalt barrier layer **126** is selectively deposited on the top surface of the plurality of copper structures **124**, using an aqueous electro-less cobalt bath, assisted by application of the sonic energy. By applying sonic energy during deposition, substantially less, or possibly no deposition of cobalt **134** on the top surface of the interlayer dielectric layer **130** may be effectuated.

20 In various embodiments, the interlayer dielectric layer **122** may also have sonic energy simultaneously applied while the top surface is being rinsed after deposition. The combined simultaneous rinse and application of sonic energy,

after deposition, may further contribute to the decrease of the amount of cobalt particles adhered to the interlayer dielectric layer **122**.

As described earlier, the sonic energy may be applied for a portion or the entire duration of the deposition/rinsing. The sonic energy may be a selected one of mega and ultra sonic energy, of a selected frequency between 10 and 1200 Hertz, and of a power level between 1 and 5 Watts/cm<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 3 illustrates a block diagram view of a system suitable for use to practice the sonic energy augmented process for forming cobalt caps on copper structures disposed on a hydrophobic interlayer dielectric layer, in accordance with one embodiment. As illustrated, system **300** includes chamber **302** adapted for cobalt deposition to form the cobalt capping on copper structures disposed on a hydrophobic interlayer dielectric layer. Chamber **302** includes a substrate holder **304** for holding the substrate with the hydrophobic interlayer dielectric layer having copper structures to be cobalt capped.

Additionally, for the embodiment, system **300** includes sonic energy generator **308** coupled to chamber **302** to allow sonic energy to be generated and provided to chamber **302** during the cobalt deposition process, as earlier described.

Further, for the embodiment, system **300** includes one or more tanks coupled to chamber **302** to store and provide chamber **302** with an aqueous electro-less solution for the rinsing operation earlier described. For the embodiment, sonic generator **308** is also adapted to allow sonic energy to be generated and provided to chamber **302** during the rinsing process, as earlier described.

Except for the novel employment of sonic energy generator **308** to generate and provide sonic energy to augment the cobalt deposition and/or the

rinsing process, chamber 302, tanks 306 and sonic energy generator 308 may be implemented in any one of a variety of manners.

Figure 4 illustrates a block diagram view of a system having a semiconductor package with a die having copper structures cobalt capped as earlier described, in accordance with one embodiment. As illustrated, for the embodiment, system 400 includes a communication interface 402 coupled to a bus 404. The bus 404 is coupled to the semiconductor package 406 and the semiconductor package 406 comprises a die 408. The die 408 has a hydrophobic interlayer dielectric layer and a plurality of copper structures disposed thereon. Further, a cobalt barrier layer is deposited on a top surface of each of the plurality of copper structures, as earlier described. The interlayer dielectric layer has a decreased amount of cobalt deposition that may be effectuated by augmenting the cobalt deposition process, and/or the post-deposition rinsing process, with sonic energy, as earlier described with reference to Fig. 2.

In various embodiments, semiconductor package 406 may be a microprocessor, a memory device, a graphics processor, a crypto processor, digital signal processor, or other semiconductor devices of the like.

In various embodiments, system 400 may be a wireless mobile phone, a personal digital assistant, a tablet computer, a laptop computer, a desktop computer, a server, a digital camera, a digital versatile disk player, an audio/video media play, or a set-top box. Communication interface 402 may be a networking interface.

Thus, it can be seen from the above descriptions, a novel component having the formation of cobalt caps on copper interconnects, method for making such a component, and a system having such a component have been described. While the present invention has been described in terms of the

foregoing embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention is not limited to the embodiments described. The present invention can be practiced with modification and alteration within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

5        Thus, the description is to be regarded as illustrative instead of restrictive on the present invention.